, Expansion of Bhilai and Bokaro . Steel Plants

710. SHRI PARVATHANENI UPKN , DRA: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether there had been any progress in the recent past in the expansion projects of Bhilai and Bokaro Steel Plants;

(b) whether it is a fact that there has been a sharp escalation in the costs of the expansion plans of these plants; and

(c) if so, what are the 'reasons therefor and what are the latest estimates of costs of expansion projects of these plants?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI M. L. FOTEDAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

In the. Bhilai Steel Plant while all the units in the Phase I of the Expansion Project already stand completed and commissioned, out of the Phase Ii units Blast Furance No. 7 is scheduled for blowing in September. 1987. Coke-oven Battery No. 9 and Bye Product Plant are likely to be commissioned by January, 1988. Bulk of the civil and erection works have already reached near completion, having achieved the level of 92 per cent and above. The Expansion is expected to be completed by September 1988 with the commissioning of Second Normalising Furnance and Vacuum Arc Degassing Unit.

As regards 4 MT Expansion of Bokaro Steel Plant also, the civil and erection works have reached a near coompletion stage. While the Benzol Rectification Plant, Additional Coil Yard and the 7th Rotary Kiln Unit have already been completed in December 1986, Cold Rolling Mill and Additional Oxygen facilities are likely to be commissioned in February 1988 and May 1988 respectively.

(b) Yes Sir. The Expansion of Bokaro which was originally estimated to cost Rs. 947 crores in 1974 is anticipated to cost Rs. 2070 crores. The Bhilui Expansion was originally estimated to cost Rs. 937 crores in 1971 and is now likely to cost Rs. 2260 crores.

(c) The increase in cost has mainly on account of the escalation in the price of the plant and equipment and other items of work, provision of additional facilities and changes in the quantity of work due to detailed engineering, as well as due to increase in interest, duties and taxes during the life of the project.

Renovation of Haldia Fertilizer Plant

711.SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Haldia Fertilizer Plant is producing any fertilizers since October, 1986;

(b) if so, the reasons therefore;

(c) whether there is any proposal to seek Japanese help for reactivisation and renovation of the Haldia; Fertilizer Plant; and

(d) if so, the details trereof

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF FERTILIZERS IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI R. PRABHU): (a> and (b) Haldia Fertilizer Project is still a project and has not started commercial production. As there were frequent equipment problems during the commissioning of the plant, Government decided in October, 1986 to stop commissioning activities.

(c) and (d) There is no proposal at present to avail of Japanese credit for the end-to-end survey, for which Government has released Rs. 3 crores as free foreign exchange for engaging consultants.

Drought Situation and srortage of. water

712. SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA; Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are

aware of the serious drought situation prevaling in large parts of the country and the serious difficulties and miseries of large sections of the population due to shortage of water;

(b) if so; what are the specific steps taken by the Central Govern ment to help the States which are facing drought and water shortage;

(c) whether Government have made any allocation of funds to help the various states to tide over the (serious situation; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICUL TURE AND COOPERATION IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI YOGENDRA MAKWANA): (a) Due to erratic behaviour of the South-West monsoon this year,' the States of Rajasthan Gujarat, Tamil Nadu and Madhya Pradesh have reported drought conditions and the Government of Uttar Pradesh has also reported about the developing drought situation. Reports of mois ture stress and shortage of water have also been received from the Union Territory of Pondicherry.

(b) to (d) Relief to affected farmers is extended by the respective State Governments and the Central Government extends need based assistance to the State Governments at the latter'g request. Government of India maintains close lioison with the State Governments concerned and supplement their efforts with a view to mitigate the distress of affected people. The concerned State Governments have taken up employment generation programmes acceleration of water supply programmes, transportation of drinking water to areas where sources of drinking water is not available, transportation of fodder from surplus areas to the drought affected areas for cattle conservation, etc. Central Government besides providing technical and financial assistance to the States for improving rural water supply has also launched a "Technical Mission on Drinking water in villages and 'related Water Management" scheme. The areas selected for taking up 'Mini Mission Pilot Project' under the Technical mission in 1986- 87 also include areas known for pro longed drought, such as Kutch in Gujarat, Jhabua in M.P., Gulberga in Karnataka, Mirzapur in U.P. and Bankura in West Bengal.

A ceiling of expenditure to the tune of Rs. 226.43 crores have so far been approved for tackling drought conditious during 1987-88 in 'respect of 9 States including Gujarat, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu and Madhya Pradesh. In addition, 5.00 lakh M.T. wheat has been allocated during 1987-88 to the States of Rajasthan Ma dhya Pradesh and Gujarat for distri bution to the workers engaged in drought relief works.

Allotment of steel to the Northern Zone

713. SHRI ASHOK NATH VERMA: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) the quantity of steel allotted **to** the Northern Zone fey the Steel Authority of India Limited/Steel Plant during the last two years, year-wise and itemwise;

(b) the quantity distributed in the Northern Zone as per the allotment order of the Regional Iron Steel Controller|SAIL and the quantity sold In the open market, year-wise;

(c) the quantity remained unlifted, yard-wise:

(d) the number of Yard Managers working for more than four years in the yard; and

(e) the number of complaints re ceived against Yard Managers, yard-wise, for malpractices under weigh ing and over charging and for not honouring the allotment order toge ther with the action taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI M. L. FOTEDAR): (a) and (b) Steel materials are distributed in terms of the Distribution